FACTORS AFFECTING INMATE POPULATIONS

The Jail Profile Survey gathers data regarding both the size and the characteristics of the inmate populations. Data on factors such as unserved arrest warrants, the number of inmates booked during the year and typical lengths of stay help the BOC analyze the forces driving the local jail system and predict likely outcomes.

Unserved Warrants

Not all persons issued a warrant of arrest end up as part of the local jail population. As Chart 6 indicates, by the 4th Quarter of 2000, there were 253,361 outstanding felony warrants. If all of the felony warrants issued were served within a short period of time, the jail population could increase tri-fold.

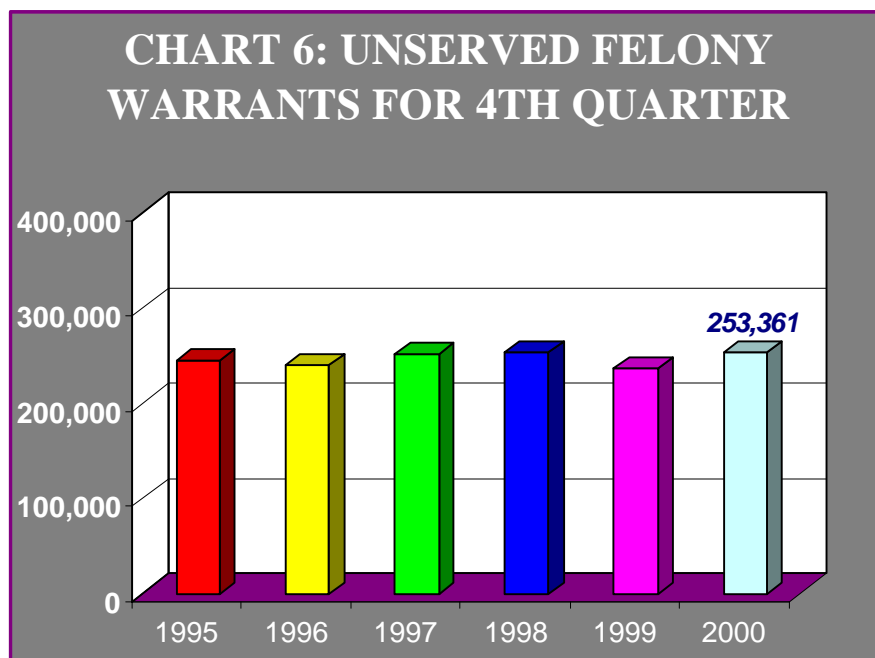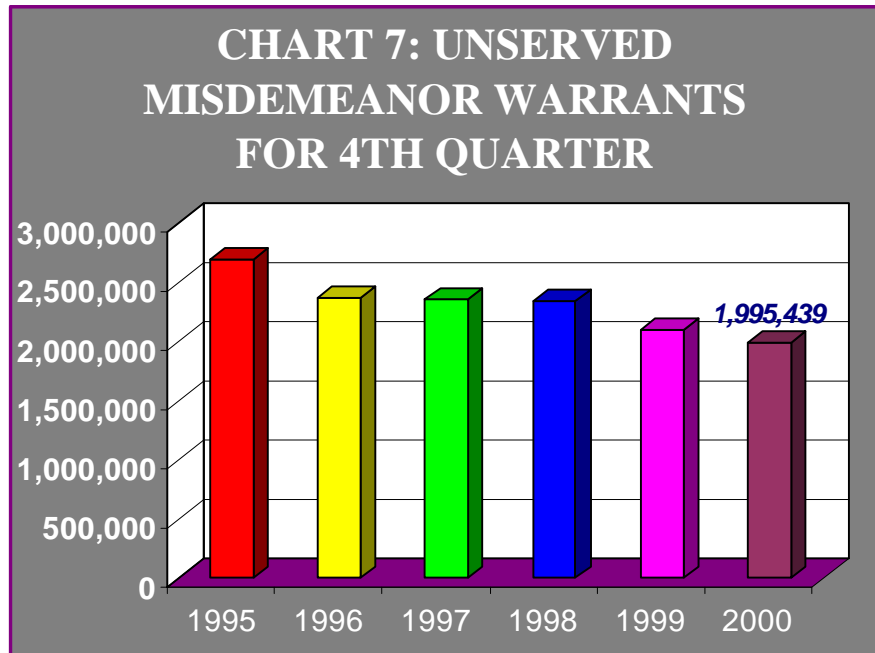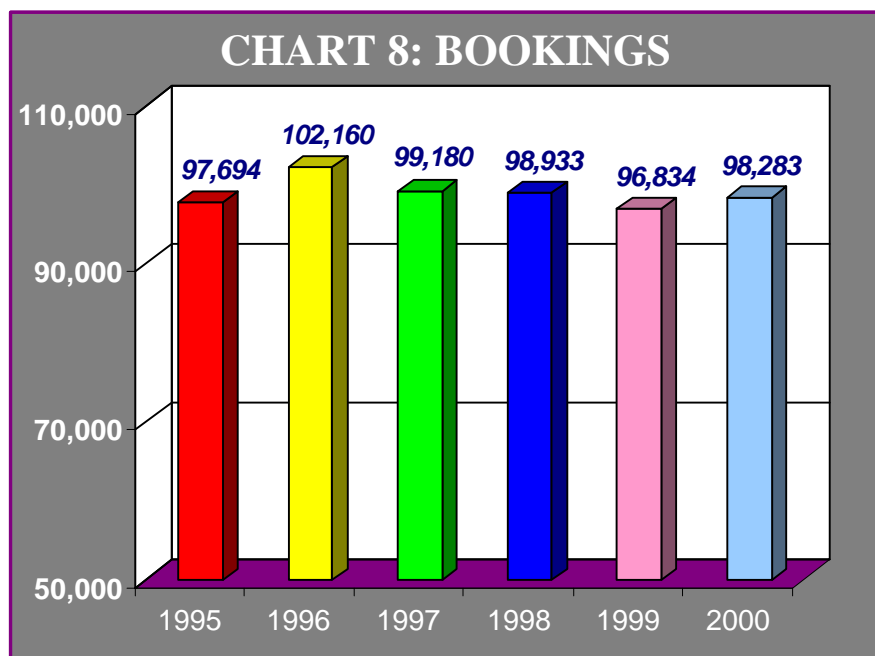**CHART 6: UNSERVED FELONY WARRANTS FOR 4TH QUARTER**

Chart 7 shows that the number of unserved misdemeanor warrants as of the 4th Quarter of 2000 was close to two million. Unlike felony warrants, the number of unserved misdemeanor warrants has decreased almost 26% since 1995. Relative to this, the number of inmates in the population on misdemeanor charges has been steadily decreasing. In 2000, the number of misdemeanor inmates was 30%, as opposed to 32% in 1995. It can be assumed that, due to crowding, sentencing policies may preclude the incarceration of many misdemeanants.

Both felony and misdemeanor unserved warrants, as of the 4th Quarter of 2000, were a combined total of 2.2 million. The effects that serving even a small portion of these warrants during a short period of time on an already strained local jail system would create virtually unmanageable problems.

CHART 7: UNSERVED MISDEMEANOR WARRANTS FOR 4TH QUARTER

1,995,439

(values: 3,000,000 / 2,500,000 / 2,000,000 / 1,500,000 / 1,000,000 / 500,000 / 0)

1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000

Bookings

The Jail Profile Survey tracks the number of bookings into Type II, III and IV facilities. Since 1995, average number of bookings per month has remained fairly stable: between 97,000 and 98,000; the only exception was a 5,000 jump from 1995 to 1996.

CHART 8: BOOKINGS

97,694   102,160   99,180   98,933   96,834   98,283

(values: 110,000 / 90,000 / 70,000 / 50,000)
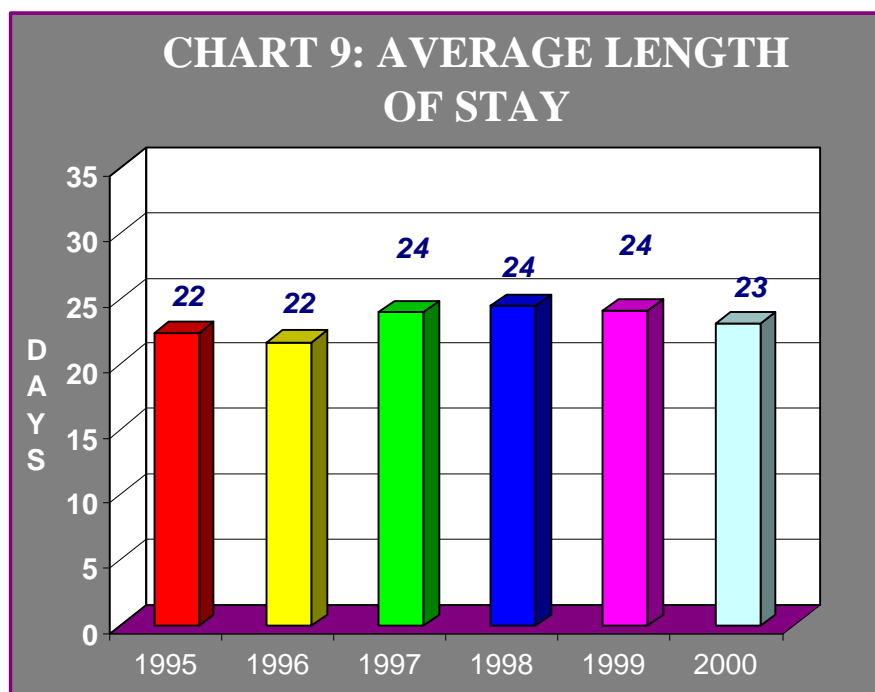
1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000

Booking statistics can be interpreted in several ways. With the advent of booking fees, the number of people booked into Type I facilities has grown; according to a recent BOC Survey,

Type I facilities book over 400,000 people per year. Also important to keep in mind is the fact that not all people booked into Type II, III and IV facilities remain in the jail for an extended period of time. Because of the lack of space, many persons are also booked and released, depending on their charges.

While bookings per month have remained stable over the last five years, it is important to remember that in 1990 bookings were reaching 120,000 per month, yet decreased to around 97,000 per month by 1995.
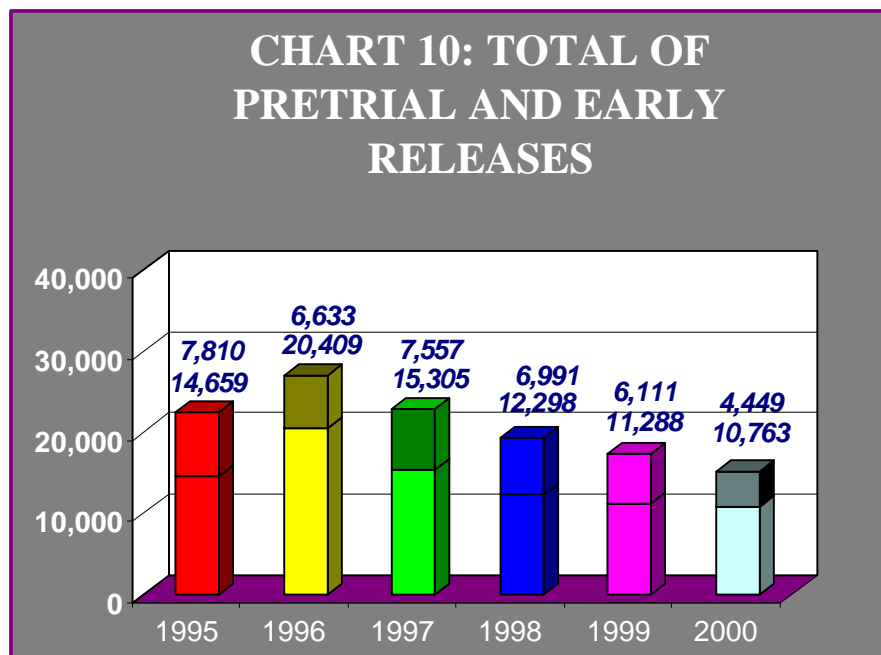
Average Length of Stay

The average length of time that an inmate spends in jail has a direct effect on the need for jail space. In 1990, the average length of stay was estimated at around 17.9 days per person, while the ADP was 70,845. In 2000, the average length of stay was almost six days greater, at 23 days per person. The ADP for 2000 was 74, 937. Chart 9 shows this fluctuation in the average length of stay from 1995 through 2000.

One way to look at the jail population is in terms of "bed days per year." This term defines the total number of beds that were occupied during the entire year and can help describe the needs and demands of a growing population. Increasing the average length of stay by even one day can affect the number of beds needed dramatically.

Pretrial and Early Releases

In 2000, about 15,000 inmates were granted pre-trial early release, or were released early from their sentence due to a lack of space. 5,000 of these early releases were pre-trial, while 10,000 had been released early as a condition of their sentence. The top number in Chart 10 represents those inmates granted early release pending trial, and the lower number represents those released early as a condition of their sentence.

CHART 10: TOTAL OF PRETRIAL AND EARLY RELEASES

Year	Top (pretrial)	Bottom (sentence)
1995	7,810	14,659
1996	6,633	20,409
1997	7,557	15,305
1998	6,991	12,298
1999	6,111	11,288
2000	4,449	10,763

Since 1996, the number of early releases has steadily decreased. However, the fact that California local jails must release 15,000 inmates each month to accommodate newly arrested and booked individuals highlights that the need for space continues to be a pressing issue.